

DENGKI G's

NEW RELEASE!!

01

# NOVEL

勇者である

乃木若葉は

ワンダーランドー

アウトロー

企画原案・シリーズ構成：タカヒロ（みなとよる）  
執筆：朱白あおい イラスト：BUNBUN 監修：Project 2H

著：田中ロミオ  
キャラクター原案・原絵：saitom 挿絵：大越ケンシ



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## 乃木若葉は 勇者である

企画原案・シリーズ構成：

タカヒロ（みなとそふと）

執筆：朱白あおい

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挿絵：大岩ケンジ

035

## 次号予告

D E N G E K I G ' s

NOVEL

電撃G's magazine 2015年9月号付録

[ 電撃G'sノベル ]





This afternoon,  
I peered over the Seto Inland Sea from Marugame Castle.  
Each time I stand here, I renew my vow.  
I swear to take back the world stolen from us.  
We as heroes are the weapons to achieve that goal.  
Small may our numbers be, but we must fulfill our duty.  
Among our comrades,  
A proactive stance like Yuuna's is hard to find in this world.  
I can see an unstable side to [REDACTED], but...

Hero Record Aug 2018 AD

Nogi Wakaba's Record



# 第一話 —芽出—

vol.1

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乃木若葉は  
勇者である

企画原案・シリーズ構成／

**タカヒロ** (みなとそふと)

執筆／朱白あおい イラスト／BUNBUN

バーテックスデザイン／D.K&JW WORKS

監修／Project 2H





-July 30, 2018

Nogi Wakaba stood at the Kagawa Prefecture Marugame Castle atop the inner citadel stone walls, overlooking the Seto Inland Sea.

In her hand was a sword. Ever since before she could remember, Wakaba had been training in iai, and thus the weight of that sword felt quite familiar to her body.

The midsummer sunlight poured down from above, causing sweat to seep from her skin.

Cicadas were chirping busily around her.

She closed her eyes.

She still vividly remembered-- the despair and anger from that day.

\* \* \*

-July 30, 2015

Nogi Wakaba, a fifth grader at the time, was taking refuge at a shrine's kagura-den in Shimane Prefecture.

She was on a field trip from Kagawa to Shimane when an intense earthquake occurred.

Earthquakes kept happening intermittently after that, and so the teachers decided it was an emergency situation and evacuated the students to the shrine, which was the shelter in the area. The number of people in the shelter, which included nearby residents, was quite high.

Wakaba's school was holding a field trip in the middle of summer break due to the number of lesson days, but it was completely unexpected that they would get caught in an emergency situation like this.

As class president, Wakaba took a roll call of her classmates and informed their home-room teacher that all were present and accounted for. According to what she heard from the teachers, apparently, the earthquakes weren't happening just in Shimane, but everywhere throughout the country. Fissures and tsunamis were happening as a result, and damage was happening throughout Japan...

However, Wakaba's classmates seemed to actually find it exciting how this turn of events happened during their field trip. Friends were talking amongst each other and those with smart-phones were checking news sites.

- "You think we'll have to stay here until tomorrow?"

- "Wha? But we're finally on a field trip and everything."

- "Anyone have cards?"

A group of three girls was chatting amongst themselves. Wakaba looked towards them.



(I should probably warn them... no, there's no need to go that far. Letting them chat like this might actually help soften their anxiety.)

As she had that thought in mind,

- "...Ah, Nogi-san's glaring at us."

- "Are we being too noisy?"

- "Let's quiet it down before she gets angry at us."

The girls who had been talking softened their voices.

(Ah... I wasn't particularly mad or anything ...Does my face really look that scary...?)

- "Wah-kah-bah chan!"

Wakaba turned around as the voice called to her to see a camera flash before her eyes. It was her classmate and childhood friend, Uesato Hinata with a smart-phone at the ready.

- "Mmm... Wakaba-chan... you're so picturesque with that listless look on your face. The shrine building in the background is great too. That's one more picture in my treasured Wakaba-chan image collection."

- "Hi~na~ta~... Don't collect photos of me! Delete it!"

- "No! This image collection is my lifework!"

Hinata boldly declared something incomprehensible.

- "Please don't make such a scary face. Your forehead's gonna get wrinkly, you know! Squishy squishy."

- "... Could you please not press on people's foreheads with your fingers?"

- "I'm just trying to loosen you up. It's because of that strict face of yours that classmates get scared of you just like what happened now."

- "You... you saw that?"

Wakaba's face heated up in embarrassment.

- "Now, now, Wakaba-chan, it's because you're always so serious. Ever since first grade, you've been an honour student and class president. Our classmates have this image of you being an 'iron woman'."

- "Uggh..."

She was aware of it herself, but it was still a shock to hear it again.

- "But... You just gotta shatter that image yourself!"

Hinata grinned and took Wakaba by the hand as she lead her back to that same group of female classmates.





- "H-hey, wait!?"

- "Good evening!"

Hinata ignored Wakaba's confusion as she called out to the girls. The girls were just as confused.

- "Sorry about that. The truth is that Wakaba-chan wanted to join in on your conversation."

- "H-Hinata, what are you--!?"

- "What are you being so embarrassed about? You see, she wasn't thinking of giving you girls a warning. She was actually having a cute little inner struggle of how to join in on the conversation."

- "Wha? That's not--"

When Wakaba tried to deny the story, Hinata covered Wakaba's mouth.

- "Mmm! Mmm!"

The three girls were confused for a second--  
But eventually that confusion seemed to blow away and they smiled.

- "Hmm, that kinda changes my image of Nogi-san."

- "Well, she always seems precise, and she's quite the honour student, after all"

- "Yeah, yeah. I thought she was a scarier, stricter person!"

- "I see what you mean-- Oh, and Wakaba-chan's unsociable, so she's at a disadvantage in that regard, I think."

It was a bizarre progression of events, but Wakaba and Hinata joined the group of three girls and talked with them. Hinata spoke with them as familiarly as one would speak with years-long friends.

She had the sociability to get along with anyone, which Wakaba lacked. Because of Wakaba's overly-serious nature, she felt a little disconnected with the rest of the class.

- "But she's a super cute girl on the inside. I, Uesato Hinata, can attest to that. So please get along with her, okay?"

- "C-c-c-c-cute...? What are you talking about!?"

Despite Wakaba glaring at her, Hinata didn't shy away and just said 'now now'.

- "Ahahah, that's so funny. Don't worry. We're already friends with Nogi-san now."

The girls smiled and said that as they saw Wakaba and Hinata's interactions.









After they had talked for a while, Wakaba went outside the kagura-den. Though it was already evening, the July heat was still substantial, so she wanted to feel a little bit of the evening breeze.

From time immemorial, a shrine's torii was said to be a boundary to an outer world. Back in the age before people had forgotten religious piety, a shrine was treated as another world. Wakaba did not know that shrines held that meaning, but she was able to feel the place's tranquillity.

When she looked up at the sky, she could see the twinkling of countless stars.

- "So this is where you were, Wakaba-chan. It's getting late. Aren't you going to sleep?"

Hinata had gone outside as well and she stood beside Wakaba.

- "Well, a problem could arise while we're sleeping for all we now. I thought I'd stay awake just in case."

- "The teachers should be the ones to stay awake, though."

- "I'm class president, so it's my duty."

- "Haah~... Really, Wakaba-chan. I don't know if you're just being way too serious or what."

Hinata smiled slightly in resignation.

- "So I'll stay awake with you."

- "... You don't need to accompany me, you know?"

- "No, it's because I'm your childhood friend. I'll always be with you."

When Hinata answered in such a clear tone of voice, Wakaba had no more forceful words to say.

- "... Hinata."

- "What is it?"

- "Thanks for what you did back there. If you weren't around, I would've ended up distancing myself from our classmates again."

- "No, no, I just don't like it when people misunderstand you, Wakaba-chan."

Hinata spoke as if she had only done the natural thing to do.

But Wakaba wasn't satisfied with just that.

- "A reward for everything. That's the Nogi way of life."

That was a commandment that Wakaba's grandmother often spoke of. Wakaba loved her grandmother dearly, and so she treasured those words of hers.

- "So I want to reward you for your friendship, Hinata. If there's anything you want me to do for you, then just ask."



- "Well, if you insist... hmm, then how about you help me grow my treasured image collection by wearing... some sort of cosplay? ... While we're at it, how about something a little extreme..."

Hinata muttered something improper.

Perhaps Wakaba spoke too soon... she was starting to regret her decision a little.

- "Well, I'll take my time to think of what I should have you do, Wakaba-chan. Anyway, for now, it'd be great for you to be more at ease when you talk to people in class. If you do, then everyone else will start to understand you and get along with you better. If you ever get nervous about talking to someone, I'll help you out just like I did now."

Hinata's words slowly sank into Wakaba's body.

(I can get along with everyone better... huh?)

Wakaba was a little detached from the class, but perhaps she herself had been unconsciously distancing herself from her classmates. Perhaps if she actually tried talking to people like they did now, it would be simple to get along with everyone.

- "Ah, but then if you get really popular, you might not care about me anymore, Wakaba-chan. You'll toss me out like a woman of the past, won't you... yoyoyo."

- "Wh-what are you talking about!? Of course I wouldn't do that! No matter what happens, you're my best friend!"

As Wakaba struggled to put together words, Hinata smiled strangely.

- "It was just a joke. Oh, Wakaba-chan--"

Suddenly, the ground shook intensely.

(This... is on a completely different scale than the other tremors...!)

The tremors made it difficult to even stand. Wakaba kept her stance lowered to prevent herself from falling down. Beside her, Hinata let out a small shriek as her rear fell to the ground. After a few dozen seconds, the tremors settled.

- "That was a huge tremor, huh... Hinata, you okay?"

Wakaba held her hand out to Hinata.

But without taking her hand, Hinata just muttered with a ghostly pale look on her face.





- "I'm scared..."

- "Huh?"

Hinata's body was trembling slightly.

- "Wa-Wakaba-chan... s... something really, really scary is..."

She looked up to the sky as she spoke.

Thinking there was something up there, Wakaba looked up as well.

On her first look, what she saw was an ordinary starry sky.

But she was mistaken.

The countless stars in the sky squirmed as if they were drifting about on the surface of water.

At first, Wakaba thought the star-like objects were birds or something.

But their movements were irregular and it would be strange for so many birds to be flying in the sky so late at night.

And then several of those stars got bigger and bigger--

Despair fell from the sky.

One of the star-like objects fell onto the roof of the kagura-den. It definitely was not a bird at all. Its entire body was an almost unnatural white, its size far more gigantic than a human, with an ominous mouth-like organ. It appeared to be like a deep sea animal that had evolved far differently than terrestrial animals, or possibly an invertebrate that was born under imperfect conditions. In any case, it was clearly different from any living being known to mankind, and therefore, the simplest name to call it was-- a "monster".

And it wasn't alone. Two, three... several came falling from the sky in quick succession, tearing apart the kagura-den's roof and walls with their teeth and breaking in.

- "What... are those things...?"

Wakaba stood stock still at the bizarre sight unravelling before her.

On unsteady feet-- Hinata stood up. A strange light imbued her eyes and hex-like words leaked from her mouth.

"--...-----"



The moment Wakaba tried to ask what was wrong, people darted out from inside the kagura-den, screaming.

- "Kyaaaaaaaaah!!!"

- "Wh-wha-what are those monsters!?"

(Khh!)

Wakaba immediately rushed to the kagura-den. Hinata grabbed her by the hand.

- "I'm going too."

The strange light had disappeared from Hinata's eyes, and instead, they displayed an intense will. Her tone of voice was firm as well.

Wakaba began to wonder what was with her bizarre state just a few seconds ago...? There was no time to think about that. All that mattered now was to protect their classmates for now.

Wakaba and Hinata rushed into the kagura-den. And what they saw-- was people being eaten.

The bizarre white creatures were eating the people who were too slow to escape with their mouth-like organs. Their mouths became stained red by blood and beneath their giant bodies were pieces of half-eaten people. Including the completely disfigured remains of students from Wakaba's school.

- "Ah... ahh..."

A groan leaked out of Wakaba's mouth.

She couldn't believe the scene unfurling before her eyes. It felt too unreal. The friends she had been enjoyed talking to less than an hour ago were now reduced to unspeakable remains.

- "Waaaaaahhhhhhhhhhh!!!"

Wakaba rushed towards the bizarre creatures. She was driven by rage for her murdered friends and the sense of duty to prevent any further death. As she ran, she picked up a fragment of wood that had probably broken off when the roof was destroyed, and pierced the fragment's pointed end into one of the monsters.

But... for some reason, there was no feedback.

The white giant flung Wakaba away like a bug. Her small body fell onto an altar inside the shrine. The altar broke, sending a shock and pain through Wakaba's entire body.

- "Ugh... gh..."

Her body wouldn't move.

She moved just her head and saw the bizarre creatures looking her way.





The people who were quick enough to react had already fled the building, but some of the children in Wakaba's grade were paralyzed with fear.

(Run... away...)

Wakaba tried to yell that, but she could hardly even muster a whisper. The children who were too slow to run away, and Wakaba herself were all being cornered by the monsters.

But then, Hinata's voice rang out.

- "Wakaba-chan, please reach out your right hand! It should be there!"

(My hand...?)

Wakaba reached out her right hand as told.

She felt it touch something.

A sword.

A sword and scabbard rusted from the passing years had been inside the broken altar.

(Why... why would a sword be here...?)

Wakaba grasped the grip and pulled it in.

Throb. Blood suddenly started pounding through her entire body.

She felt like she was on fire.

She felt like she was drowning.

And at the same time-- an unknown strength welled up inside of her as if to reconstruct her body into something else entirely.

In ancient times, there was a king of the gods of the land whose name was 《Musuu no Buki (無数の武器/Infinite Weapons)》.

He and his fellow gods tried to protect the children of their country.

Among the king's sacred treasures was a sword from the underworld.

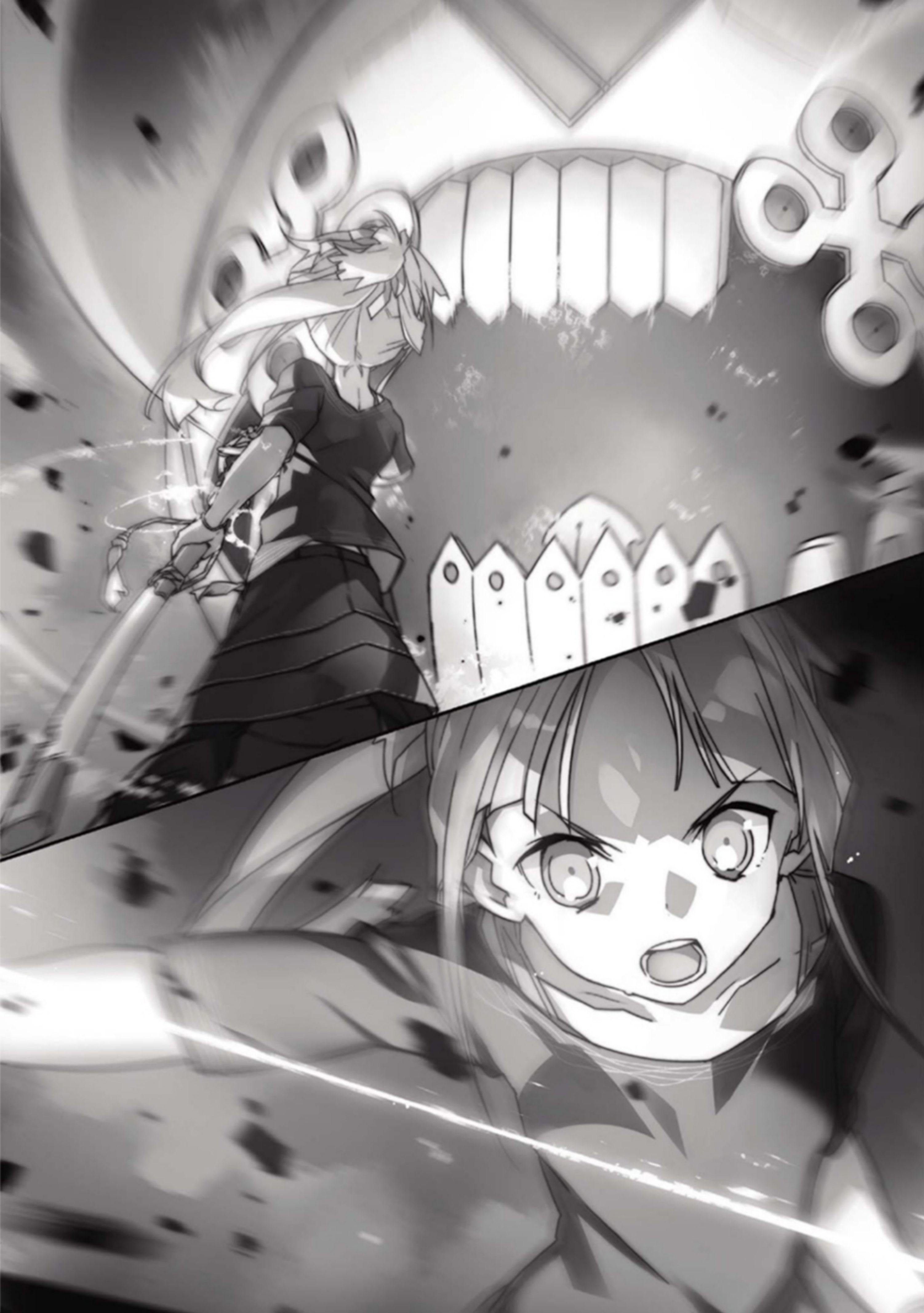
Simple. Yet beautiful. A weapon unmatched in murderous power.

Its name-- 《Ikutachi (生大刀/The Life Force Blade)》

When she snapped back to her senses, Wakaba was standing up with that very sword in hand. She could've sworn the blade was rusted, but before she had realized it, the blade was tinged with a vibrant, almost living, brilliance.

Wakaba sheathed the sword, brought her left foot forward, and held the grip,









and stared at the enemy. She had trained in iai since childhood. Her accumulated experience moved her body naturally.

The white monster's giant body approached.

As Wakaba drew it from its sheath, her sword was light itself.

The being that entered its range was instantly split in two.

As Wakaba re-sheathed the sword, the split monster let out a hard-to-describe cry and vanished.

And then one by one, Wakaba cut down the onslaught of bizarre creatures, each with a single stroke of her sword. It was a mysterious sensation. The sword was easy to handle, as if it were but an extension of her arm, and her body moved as swiftly as the wind.

In the blink of an eye, all the monsters in the kagura-den were eradicated.

- "Wakaba-chan! Those strange things are overflowing outside too!"

Hinata screamed that as she ran towards Wakaba.

Before they had realized it, tremendous numbers of the monsters had the kagura-den surrounded outside. The people who tried to escape began to despair at their loss of escape routes.

As Wakaba left the kagura-den, she gripped her sword.

No matter how many dozens of enemies there were, she would not falter--

- "... Wh-what...?"

Something unusual happened with the monsters.

Several of them lumped together in the same place and conglomerated like clay, changing form into something even more gigantic...

Some changed into a form like a centipede.

Some changed into a form like a body surface with an arrow.

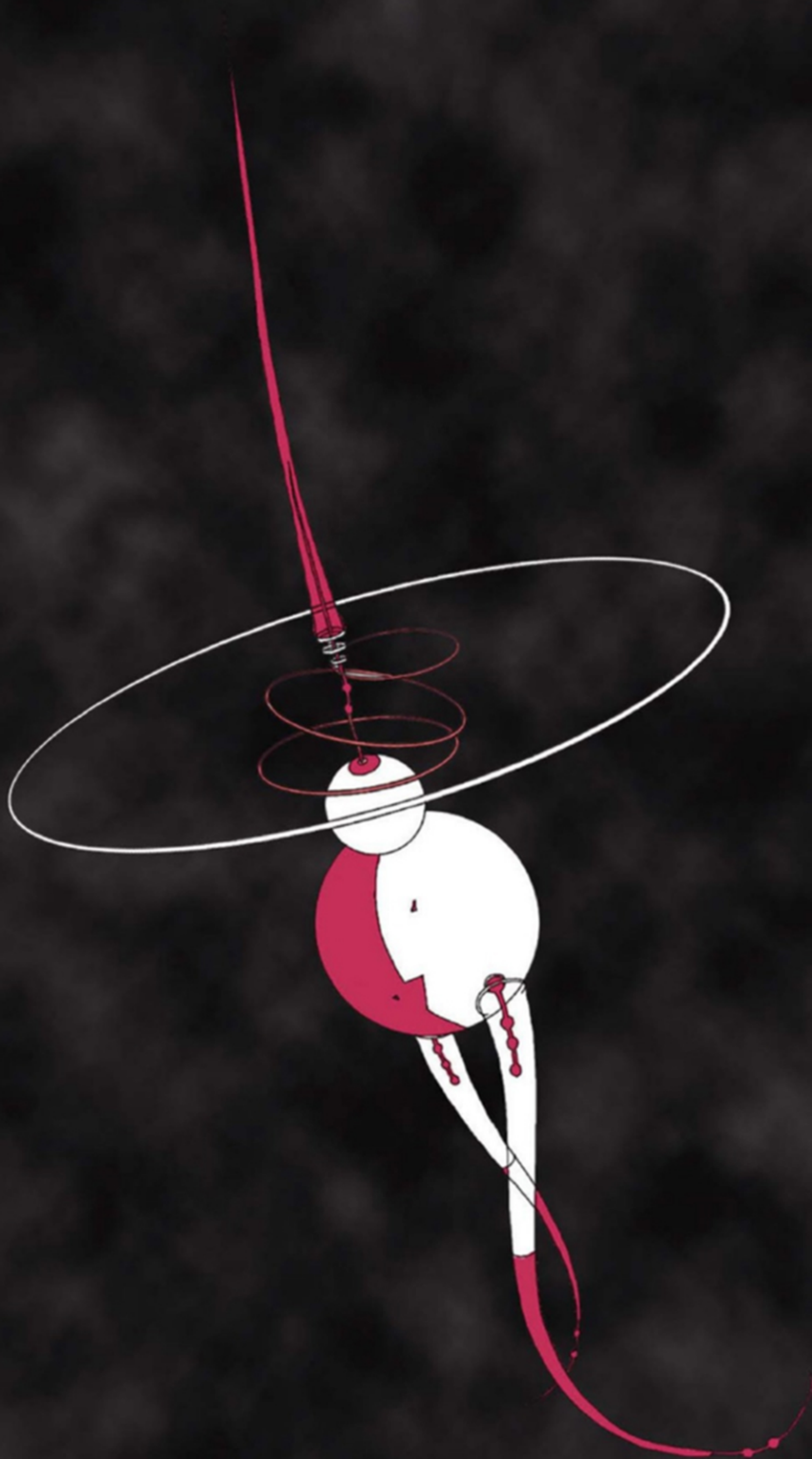
Some changed into a form like the edge of a section of body tissue, stiffening and rising up.

(... They're... evolving...?)

Perhaps they had learned that they individually could not defeat Nogi Wakaba. The means they had chosen to oppose an existence stronger than themselves was to "evolve".

The biological evolution was to begin with the simplest single celled organism, take several of those single celled organisms together to create a colony, and from colonies, complex multi-cellular organisms would arise.









What the white monsters were undergoing was truly biological evolution itself, except at an abnormal speed.

It took billions and billions of years for life on earth to evolve from single-celled organisms to multi-cellular organisms. And yet it took these monsters mere minutes.

In a certain sense, those monsters could perhaps be said to surpass all life on earth. They were beings like "gods" or "demons"--

One of the creatures that had conglomerated and increased in size shot out the arrow that its body had produced. The arrow pierced through all the people in its trajectory, wrecking the kagura-den at the end of its path. With just one strike, a third of the kagura-den crumbled to the ground.

Meanwhile, the number of the smaller monsters grew and grew, repeating the cycle of conglomerating and changing form, giving birth to countless numbers of the large monsters.

All thoughts of winning disappeared completely from Wakaba's mind. How could she win against countless numbers of enemies with unthinkable destructive force?

Right as her entire body threatened to collapse out of despair--

What supported her was her best friend.

"Please don't give up, Wakaba-chan."

"... Hinata..."

"I won't let you and everyone die, Wakaba-chan."

Hinata spoke with a resolute, and somehow confident tone.

Hinata turned to everyone there and shouted.

"Everyone follow me! I'll guide you to a safe place!"

Hinata then walked forth at an unfaltering pace. Her visage was calm and collected, so much so that it was hard to believe she was a mere 10-year-old girl.

"Hinata, where are you...?"

"Wakaba-chan, I need you to be the outrider."

The current aura about her suggested she would not take no for an answer.

"... Okay."

There was no time for hesitation. Wakaba had no choice but to trust her friend.

"Come with us if you want to live!"

With Wakaba and Hinata at the lead, other people followed, though confused. Wakaba cut down any enemies that stood in Hinata's way.

The group lead by the two reached the shrine's honden. The honden was surrounded by gates and walls, and for some reason, not a single one of the white monsters had appeared within.

"They cannot enter here."



Hinata spoke with relief in her face, as if a weight had been taken off of her shoulders.

The people who had followed Wakaba and Hinata didn't look like they could believe it, but they still sat down as if they had lost their strength.

- "How... did you know this place was safe?"

Wakaba asked Hinata.

Hinata tilted her head a little to the side as if in thought as she answered.

- "Hmm... a hunch, I guess."

- "A-a hunch...?"

Wakaba smiled wryly. Hinata sounded a little too confident back there for just a hunch... but it was quite like Hinata to do something like that.

- "But it's not like we can stay here forever, can we?"

- "Right..."

Such a cramped place could only serve as temporary shelter.

- "It's okay. I know a safe route from here, too."

- "Another hunch, huh?"

- "Yes."

Hinata nodded with a smile. Her unwavering tone of voice sounded mysteriously trustworthy to Wakaba. Perhaps Hinata had been endowed with some sort of power in the same way Wakaba had been endowed with the power to fight.

Wakaba looked at her sword-- if something were to happen, she had the power to fight.

After a short break, Wakaba and Hinata left the honden with the refugees. They proceeded under Hinata's guidance and for some reason they came across next to none of the white monsters, and when they did, Wakaba was able to eliminate them.

The group headed southeast. They walked for days and days. And yet the sun never rose during all that time. It was as if the entire world was suffering from a nightmare from which it could not awaken.

Wakaba saw every building was in ruins. The town was half submerged in water. Countless corpses that had likely been eaten by those monsters. A gigantic fire blazed endlessly beyond the horizon. Darkness and grotesque white shapes covered the sky, filling the atmosphere with the stench of death.

Wakaba was understood--





--Ahh, they've stolen our world from us.

How long have they walked?

Wakaba and the rest of the refugees reached the ocean. On the other side was the homeland, Shikoku. The Great Bridge that connected Honshu and Shikoku remained intact in all its original majesty, as if to guide the people across.

\* \* \*

Three years later-- Nogi Wakaba was now a second year in middle school.

-"Wah-kah-bah- chan~"

Wakaba snapped back to once she heard a voice from behind her.

When she turned around, she heard the sound of a camera shutter.

It was Uesato Hinata smiling with a smart-phone at the ready.

-"Got a picture... of a beautiful girl holding a sword while gazing at the ocean. One more for the treasured Wakaba-chan image collection."

-"Hi-na-tah....!"

Wakaba reached for Hinata's smart-phone, but Hinata nimbly pocketed it before she could grab it.

-"Heh heh heh. Now you can't reach for it, can you?"

Hinata spoke triumphantly.

(Khh... One day I'll delete Hinata's incomprehensible image collection for sure.)

Wakaba and Hinata's relationship still hasn't changed. The two of them are best of friends.

Suddenly, Hinata put on a serious expression and turned to the sea.

-"You came here again today, huh."

-"... Yeah."

Three years ago on that day.

The bizarrely-shaped white monsters they saw that day-- which later came to be called "Vertexes"-- appeared all over the world and trampled humanity.

Apparently, an extremely limited number of regions-- such as parts of Nagano and Shikoku-- were able to escape the invasion. However, other areas no longer belonged to mankind, but could now be said to be under the control of the Vertexes.



In the midst of such an abnormal situation, an extraordinarily small number of girls demonstrated unique powers. Wakaba and Hinata were two of such girls. It was due to those powers that the two of them were able to save many of the people sheltered at the shrine.

However.

Many lives were lost then.

The people who could not escape from the kagura-den and were killed by the Vertexes.

Most of them were students in Wakaba's grade who came for the field trip. The classmates Wakaba made friends with that night were killed as well.

--Don't worry. We're already friends with Nogi-san now.

Wakaba still could not forget their words and their smiles.

The students who survived took a huge shock to see their friends slaughtered before their eyes. The after-effects caused a hindrance to their daily lives. Many were still undergoing counselling.

"... Vertexes killed my friends. They stole the lives of countless innocents."

That was an unforgivable, grave sin.

A reward for everything... That's the Nogi way of life.

"I swear I'll give the Vertexes their just reward. And I'll take back the world they stole from us."

"Yes. I'll be there with you too, Wakaba-chan."

AD 2018--

They were granted their roles.

Nogi Wakaba is a "hero", one who wields divine power.

Uesato Hinata is a "priestess", one who hears divine voice.

(Chapter 1 End)